REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 19-34 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 14-15, 22, 28, 31, 32, and 34 have been amended.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Objection to Claim 34

Claim 34 is objected to because of informalities.

Applicants' representatives have amended claim 34 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Applicants' representatives wish to thank the Examiner for pointing out the informality.

II. Rejection of Claims 14 and 34 Under 35 U.S.C §112

Claims 14 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants' representatives have amended claims 14 and 34 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. In particular, claim 14 has been amended to recite that "the system is restrained to keep system resources under a predetermined threshold if the number of dependencies associated with an account are below a second threshold, the predetermined threshold defining a limit on the use of system resources." Applicants' representative respectfully submits that the Specification, as filed, sufficiently teaches the claim limitations under the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. In one aspect, a classifier is employed to automate the classification of the account deficiencies. The use of the classifier reduces processor and memory usage so that predetermined performance standards for the system can be met. For instance:

> ... the classifier can be used to aid the system in facilitating self-throttling such that system resources such as I/O, memory, and processor usage (or any combination thereof) are maintained under a predetermined threshold.

> A classifier is a function that maps an input attribute vector, x = (x1, x2, x3, x4, *xn*), to a confidence that the input belongs to a class, that is, f(x) = *confidence*(*class*). Such classification can employ a probabilistic and/or statistical-based analysis (*e.g.*, factoring into the analysis utilities and costs) to prognose or infer an action that a user desires to be automatically performed. *Specification* page 13 lines 22-30.

Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants' representative has amended claim 34 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. In particular, claim 34 has been amended to recite "wherein the bulk component processes the errored account with a predetermined threshold number of attempts to resolve the errored account so that the account state is in par with the rest of accounts being processed by bulk mode." Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 1-33 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-17 and 18-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanagan et al. (US 2004/0133487 A1)(Hanagan) in view of Pather et al. (US 7,177,859 B2)(Pather). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested in view of the following comments. In particular, Hanagan and Pather do not, either individually or in combination, disclose or suggest each and every aspect set forth in the currently amended subject claims.

Applicants' representative has amended claims 1, 15, 22, 28, 31, 32, and 34 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. In particular, claim has been amended to recite "a bulk component that concurrently processes a plurality of eligible accounts with a set of dependent tasks periodically." Claim 15 has been amended to recite "a bulk component that processes a plurality of eligible accounts with a set of dependent tasks periodically." Claim 22 has been amended to recite "processing in bulk one or more eligible accounts with a set of tasks periodically to keep the one or more eligible accounts synchronized." Claim 28 has been amended to recite "processing in bulk one or more eligible accounts with a set of tasks periodically to keep the one or more eligible accounts synchronized." Claim 31 has been amended to recite "means for processing in bulk one or more eligible accounts with a set of tasks periodically." Claim 32 has been amended to recite "a second

system that processes the same set of tasks against the plurality of accounts periodically." Claim 34 has been amended to recite "a bulk component that concurrently processes a plurality of eligible accounts with a set of dependent tasks periodically."

The claimed subject matter relates to bulk processing of accounts. In particular, the claims recite a system and method for bulk and error processing of accounts with a set of ***dependent*** tasks. The system includes a removal component which removes one or more accounts from the eligible accounts for bulk processing if an error is associated therewith. In bulk mode, each task fetches only the required set of accounts for processing and in error mode, the account is removed from bulk mode and becomes ineligible for fetching in any future bulk-mode task processing. Error-mode processing tests and processes all tasks sequentially for an errored account until the account state is in par with the accounts being processed by bulk mode. In one aspect, bulk processing attempts to process the errored account a predetermined number of times before removal from bulk processing (see claim 17) or attempts to manually intervene (see claim 26) with the errored accounts These tasks and components are executed ***periodically*** (for example, daily or weekly) to keep the state of the accounts synchronized with each other and with the passage of time.

Hanagan is directed to a customer care and customer billing system composed of modular components. Hanagan teaches that the components of the customer care and billing system can be integrated together to form a coherent communication system with customers. The customer accounts can be updated with the latest information and changes propagated throughout the system. However, Hanagan fails to teach or even mention that the customer billing system processes accounts with a set of ***dependent*** tasks. Hanagan fails to teach any solution to updating the system if there are any dependencies among the customer accounts.

Pather fails to make up for the deficiencies of Hanagan with respect to accounts with dependent tasks. Pather is directed to a method of processing subscription queries into data by linking subscription queries to event data to generate a database of notification data. Pather teaches a query processor which transforms queries into data and matches the data with a database of notification data. However, Pather teaches generating notification data from an event source. The event source is defined as:

> The event provider 304 acquires events from event sources for the notification services system 302. Events represent data changes in

> the external world. For example, a stock price at a specific time is an event, as is a sports score, or a product delivery message. *Pather* col. 10 ln 31-35.

That is, Pather does not disclose processing subscription accounts ***periodically***. Additionally, Pather fails to make up for the deficiencies of Hanagan with respect to processing errored accounts a predetermined amount of times or by manual intervention.

Therefore, it is readily apparent that Hanagan and Pather, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest applicants' claimed subject matter as recited in independent claims 1, 15, 22, 28, 31, 32, and 34 (and claims 1-14, 16-17, 19-21, 23-27, 29, and 33 which respectively depend there from), and thus fails to make obvious the subject claimed invention. As such, this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP508US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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